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April 11, 2024

**VIA ECF**

Honorable Joseph A. Marutollo  
United States Magistrate Judge  
United States District Court  
Eastern District of New York  
225 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Re: **Watt v. City of New York, et al.**  
22-cv-6841(AMD)(JAM)

Your Honor:

On behalf of defendant Kevin Blackett I am making the following letter-motion application to have him excused from the settlement conference scheduled for Friday, April 12, 2024 at 2:45PM.

As you are aware Kevin Blackett is employed as a New York City Correction Officer and he works at the jail facility on Rikers Island. Tomorrow, April 12, 2024, is his last scheduled work day of the week. As part of the Department of Correction ("DOC") effort to address staffing shortages, Correction Officers are scheduled to work mandatory overtime on their last day of work before their regular day(s) off. Tomorrow Mr. Blackett has been scheduled to start work at 4:30AM and to finish at 10:00PM, a total of 17.5 hours.

I respectfully request the Court to excuse his personal appearance for the settlement conference tomorrow. His absence from work will be a major inconvenience to his coworkers and DOC, his employer. Another officer would be required to fill in for Mr. Blackett, or his post might have to be staffed by numerous other officers over his scheduled tour.

Mr. Blackett has authorized me to make a monetary contribution towards the settlement of this matter and we are hopeful of a settlement being reached.

While Mr. Blackett is not permitted to have telephonic contact while on duty, he will arrange to be available during a lunch break at 3:30PM to discuss the settlement negotiations with either the Court or me.

Additionally, Mr. Blackett does not feel comfortable being in the Courtroom with Plaintiff Watt and even if he was not scheduled to work tomorrow I would have requested that he be excused to avoid any future contact with Plaintiff.

I thank the Court for its time and attention in considering this application to excuse Mr. Blackett from the settlement conference.

Respectfully submitted,  
KARASYK & MOSCHELLA, LLP

*John W. Burns*  
John W. Burns

To: All Counsel via ECF